

The “Joy” of Cooking

By Angus Campbell, Executive Director

When I was first caregiving, I found it challenging to come up with new ideas for relatively healthy, easy to prepare, reasonably priced meals. Life had changed dramatically after my partner Paul had suddenly become a paraplegic, and he had been our primary chef. But cooking, like many other activities, became therapeutic.

So we started with “coupon therapy” to see if there were any good deals that week. He may have been wheelchair-bound, but he would happily review the flyers to see where we could save money.

From there, we could formulate some meal ideas. Casseroles and recipes that made many servings gave us leftovers for the next day or allowed us to freeze unused individual portions. We tried all kinds of different things in the slow cooker. “Preparation therapy” was important too, as it allowed Paul to contribute when he was able.

To save time, we also had some regular weekly standards – grilled cheese sandwiches with tomato soup for lunch on Tuesdays, pork chops in Campbell’s mushroom soup sauce with mashed potatoes, carrots, and beans for Wednesday dinner and, if it was Thursday lunch, then we both looked forward to tuna melts.

And I’ll never forget our neighbour Jane who would call some days to tell me that she was cooking us dinner that night. She also provided me with a great tip for keeping things as healthy as possible – shop mostly on the outer aisles to avoid processed and packaged foods.

We both loved salads, so we tried all kinds of combinations. I’m including one from my friend Alice. It’s healthy, easy to make, and delicious. Bon appétit!



Alice’s Watermelon Salad

Amounts will vary with number of servings; you can make this simple and refreshing salad for one person or 10. Allow three or four thinly sliced segments of watermelon per person. The ingredients can be prepared ahead of time, kept chilled, and then assembled just before serving.

watermelon slices
drizzle of olive oil
goat cheese, crumbled
fresh mint

Method

1. Slice watermelon thinly and remove the rind. Cut slices into segments.
2. Drizzle with small amount of olive oil.
3. Crumble some goat cheese on top.
4. Top with chopped fresh mint.



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